THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI V. SREENIVASA PRASAD): (a) to (c) According to the provisions of the Consumer Protections Act, 1986, the responsibility for setting up of the Consumer Disputes Redressal Commissions in the States and UTs and their effective functioning rests with the State Governments and UT Administrations. However, to strengthen the infrastructure for effective functioning of the State Consumer Disputes Redressal Commissions in the States and UTs, Central Government has provided a one time financial assistance of Rs. 50 lakhs per State Commission and Rs. 10 lakhs per District Forum during 1995-99. Similarly, the responsibiility of setting up of the National Commission and its effective functioning rests with the Central Government. Necessary infrastructure including supporting staff and funds have been provided to the National Consumer Disputes Redressal Commission for its effective functioning.

As per the information made available by the National Commission, 19, 91, 131 cases have been filed before the consumer disputes redressal agencies, set up under the Consumer Protection Act, 1986, out of which 16,50,919 cases (82.9%) have already been disposed of by them since their inception, which is a considerable achievement by any standard.

Threat by FCI to Foodgrains for Mid-day Meal Scheme

3627. SHRI K. RAMA MOHANA RAO:
SHRI RAMA MUNI REDDY SIRIGIREDDY:

Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Food Corporation of India has threatened to stop the supplies for the mid-day meal scheme for Primary Schools unless the Ministry of HRD pays up its arrears upto Rs. 500 crores;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether any meeting with the Ministry of HRD took place in this regard so as to resolve the issue amicably; and

(d) the measures taken to ensure that mid-day meal scheme does not face disruption on the grounds of financial constrains?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI SUBHASH MAHARIA): (a) and (b) The FCI has not stopped the supply of foodgrains for the mid-day meal scheme. The Ministry of Human Resource Development has been advised to clear the outstanding immediately.

(c) and (d) In a meeting held on 31.01.2003 with the representative of Ministry of Human Resource Development, it has been advised to commence an advance payment or cash and carry system from the 1st of April, 2003 so that the bank account of the FCI does not become irregular.

Roads sanctioned by NEC

3628. SHRI MATILAL SARKAR: Will the Minister of DEVELOPMENT OF NORTH EASTERN REGION be pleased to state:

(a) the roads sanctioned by the North-Eastern Council in different States of the region;

(b) the expenditure to be incurred on these projects; and

(c) how these roads are expected to improve the inter-linkages among these States?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF DEVELOPMENT OF NORTH EASTERN REGION (SHRI TAPAN SIKDAR): (a) Statement-I on list of sanctioned and completed schemes and Statement-II on sanctioned and ongoing schemes are enclosed. (*See* below)

(b) Statement-III is enclosed. (*See* below)

(c) Almost all roads directly or indirectly are expected to improve the aspects of inter-linkages among the North-Eastern States.